UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.7/1990/13
28 November 1989

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS
Eleventh special session
Vienna, 29 January-2 February 1990
Item 9 of the provisional agenda*

OTHER URGENT MATTERS

Review of recurrent publications and other documentation: Summary of comments received from States members of and observers to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs

Note by the Secretary-General

CONTENTS

		Paragraphs	Page
INTRODUCTION		1-6	3
Chapter			
I.	COMMENTS ON RECURRENT PUBLICATIONS	7-13	3
	A. Bulletin on Narcotic Drugs	7-8	3
	B. National laws and regulations relating to the control of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances	9-10	4
	C. Cumulative Index of National Laws and Regulations relating to the Control of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances	11	4
	D. Information Letter	12-13	4
II.	COMMENTS ON STUDIES OR REPORTS	14-18	5
	A. Quarterly summary of reports of significant seizures of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances	14	5
	B. National Authorities Empowered to Issue Certificates and Authorizations for the Import and Export of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances	15	5

*E/CN.7/1990/1.

V.89-61743 6116T

Chapter		Paragraphs	Page
	C. Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances under International Control	16	5
	D. Resource Book on Measures to Reduce Illicit Demand for Drugs	17	5
	E. Multilingual Dictionary of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances under International Control	18	5
III.	COMMENTS ON OTHER REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS	19-22	6
	A. Summary of annual reports of Governments relating to narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances	19	6
	B. Film library catalogue of the Division of Narcotic Drugs	20	6
	C. Annotated list of publications	21	6
IV.	COMMENTS ON MANUALS	22	6

INTRODUCTION

1. In its decision 1988/101, the Economic and Social Council requested "its subsidiary bodies responsible for recurrent publications to review them with the objective of identifying and discontinuing those that no longer serve a useful purpose".

2. In compliance with that request, a note by the Secretary-General on the review of recurrent publications and other documentation (E/CN.7/1989/19) was submitted to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its thirty-third session. This document listed all relevant recurrent publications, studies or reports and manuals of the Division of Narcotic Drugs of the United Nations Secretariat; it also provided a background on each publication or document in order to facilitate the review to be undertaken by the Commission.

3. After consideration of document E/CN.7/1989/19, the Commission adopted resolution 4 (XXXIII), entitled "Review of recurrent publications and other documentation", 1/ in which it requested "States members and observers of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to review the usefulness for them of the publications and documentation of the Division of Narcotic Drugs, bearing in mind current resource constraints" and "to submit their findings to the Division of Narcotic Drugs by 30 June 1989, for review by the Commission at its next session".

4. The request was transmitted by a notification of the Secretary-General to 170 States, including the 40 States members of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. Twenty-two written replies were received: from 13 members of the Commission (Australia, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Denmark, Ecuador, Indonesia, Italy, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, Spain and Zambia) and 9 other States or territories (Austria, Bahamas, German Democratic Republic, Myanmar, Netherlands Antilles, Norway, Oman, South Africa and United Arab Emirates).

5. Some of the replies received were of a general nature: they expressed satisfaction with the quality and usefulness of the publications and documentation of the Division and stated that all of them should be continued, without exception. In one reply, a general distinction was drawn between the working documentation of the Commission, which should in any case be maintained, and the technical and scientific publications, which could, if need be, be suspended. In the other replies, specific comments were made on each publication and on different types of documentation, as well as suggestions regarding their periodicity, availability and contents.

6. The present document summarizes, under each publication or type of documentation listed in document E/CN.7/1989/19, the salient points and general trend of the comments and suggestions submitted. It should be noted, however, that, given the small number of replies received, this summary can not be interpreted as reflecting the opinion of the Commission and should be considered merely as a starting point for discussion.

I. COMMENTS ON RECURRENT PUBLICATIONS

A. Bulletin on Narcotic Drugs

7. The Bulletin on Narcotic Drugs was viewed as very useful by almost all those who replied. One Government reported that the Bulletin was one of the reference documents used by its courts in matters relating to drugs.

8. It was suggested, however, in one reply that the publication of the Bulletin be reduced to one issue a year, with the possibility of bringing out a special issue should the need arise. In another reply it was recommended that the publication be discontinued.

B. National laws and regulations relating to the control of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances

9. In several replies, documents in the E/NL. series, on laws and regulations promulgated to give effect to the provisions of the international treaties on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, were described as very useful and necessary for the preparation of new laws and regulations.

10. The suggestion was made in one reply that, in view of the current financial constraints, the publication in two languages (original and translation) could be dispensed with. It should be noted that at present the documents in the E/NL. series are published either in English only, or in French only, or in Spanish/English or Spanish/French. Some Governments suggested that the series should be available in the office of the Division of Narcotic Drugs and forwarded to States and other interested users only upon request.

C. Cumulative Index of National Laws and Regulations relating to the Control of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances*

11. Views on the Cumulative Index of National Laws and Regulations Relating to the Control of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances were similar to those expressed regarding the E/NL. series. The Index was deemed useful and worth continuing. Some Governments also favoured transmitting the Index upon request only.

D. Information Letter

12. The Information Letter was considered to be a useful publication, which met a very real need. The suggestion was made to publish it more frequently and to issue it either on a quarterly basis or every second month, as had originally been scheduled.

13. Some Governments considered that the contents of the Information Letter could be improved and made more relevant to the needs of States. The suggestion was made that an extended version of the Letter be prepared, which would include summaries of the trends described in other documents or publications of the Division, such as the Bulletin of Narcotic Drugs, the Cumulative Index, the quarterly summary of reports of significant seizures of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances (E/NS.19../Summary), and the summary of annual reports of Governments relating to narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances (E/NR.19../Summary).

---

*At its thirty-third session, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs approved a draft of the Cumulative Index for the period 1980-1986 in its new format. The Cumulative Index (E/NL.1986/Index) was published in July 1989 and is before the Commission.

II. COMMENTS ON STUDIES OR REPORTS

A. Quarterly summary of reports of significant seizures of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances

14. Though the quarterly summary of reports of significant seizures of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances was generally considered to be useful, several Governments suggested that it be issued at less frequent intervals or that its availability be limited. A six-monthly or yearly publication was favoured by two Governments. It was noted in one reply that, in view of the intelligence data it contained, the summary should be made available only to national agencies and police organizations. In another, the summary was considered mostly relevant for international organizations such as the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) or United Nations bodies such as the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) and a wider distribution was not deemed necessary. One Government thought that the summary duplicated INTERPOL documentation, and another held the view that it should no longer be produced. Some suggestions were made concerning the contents of the summary, for instance that precise criteria be formulated to determine which seizures were significant; that the total number of seizures be indicated for each drug, as well as the total quantity seized of each drug and the number of persons detained.

B. National Authorities Empowered to Issue Certificates and Authorizations for the Import and Export of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances

15. The listings published yearly in National Authorities Empowered to Issue Certificates and Authorizations for the Import and Export of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (ST/NAR.3 series) were considered indispensable by all those replying.

C. Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances under International Control

16. The yearly list of manufacturers of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances under international control (ST/NAR.4 series) was acknowledged to be essential by almost all the Governments that referred to it. In one reply, however, the view was expressed that, by issuing a certificate or authorization for export, the empowered authority of the exporting country was implicitly confirming the licit status of the manufacturer, and that the list of manufacturers was therefore not indispensable.

D. Resource Book on Measures to Reduce Illicit Demand for Drugs

17. While in some replies, the Resource Book on Measures to Reduce Illicit Demand for Drugs (NAR/INF. series) was judged to be useful, several other Governments noted that it was not being used in their country. The need to update the Resource Book was stressed in several replies.

E. Multilingual Dictionary of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances under International Control

18. In almost all the comments received, the Multilingual Dictionary was considered essential for meeting international obligations and was esteemed as a publication of high quality, which should be revised periodically.

III. COMMENTS ON OTHER REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS

A. Summary of annual reports of Governments relating to narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances

19. Several comments stressed the usefulness of the summary of annual reports of Governments relating to narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances (E/NR. series) for the meetings of the Commission. In one reply, it was noted that the summary was of direct interest to the Ministry of Finance of the State concerned. While one Government expressed the view that the summary should be expanded in order to reflect data included in parts B and C of the annual reports, another proposed that it be shortened and presented as a background document to the report of INCB. The suggestion was made in one reply that, in view of the financial constraints, the summary should be discontinued.

B. Film library catalogue of the Division of Narcotic Drugs

20. In every reply it was recommended that, should the catalogue continue to be published, it should be available only on request.

C. Annotated list of publications

21. In most of the replies where mention was made of the annotated list of publications, it was judged to be useful and worth continuing.

IV. COMMENTS ON MANUALS

22. All the manuals reviewed were considered to be highly useful. It was noted in several replies that they were relied upon during judiciary proceedings as reference manuals for laboratory analysis. In one reply, the suggestion was made that the updating of the manuals be facilitated by the introduction of loose-leaf pages.

Note

1/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1989, Supplement No. 5 (E/1989/23), chap. X, sect. A.